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AEC 597/32

December 15, 1953

COPY NO. 16

ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

OPERATIONAL PHASE OF OPERATION CASTLE

Note by the Secretary

The attached letter to the Commander, JTF-7, is circulated for the information of the Commission.

ROY B. SNAPP

Secretary

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Carl Wilson 4/2/84  
REVIEWED BY DATE  
H.R. Schmidt 7/9/85  
By: W. Tench 3/18/86

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Copy No. 16 Series B

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UNITED STATES  
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION  
Washington, D.C.

December 11, 1953

Major General P.W. Clarkson, USA  
Commander, Joint Task Force Seven  
Temporary "U" Building, Room 2005  
12th and Constitution Avenue, N.W.  
Washington 25, D.C.

Dear General Clarkson:

The Commission by letter dated November 4\*, 1953 informed the Department of Defense of our intention to designate you as senior Atomic Energy Commission representative at the Pacific Proving Grounds during the operational phase of CASTLE which we recommended as commencing on December 15, 1953. Department of Defense concurrence in your designation and the starting date of the operational phase was received on December 10\*, 1953.

Accordingly, you are requested to accept this designation, together with full authority to act for the Commission in all matters which concern the successful execution of Operation CASTLE. This authority is operational in nature and not intended to transfer to you any of the continuing administrative responsibilities of the Manager, Santa Fe Operations Office, or the Field Manager, Eniwetok Field Office, or the normal responsibilities for the technical direction of the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory, the University of California Radiation Laboratory (Livermore), or their contractors. The Commission desires that command channels to Atomic Energy Commission contractors now in effect at the site be left in effect and used as far as practicable. Should operational necessity require expenditure of Atomic Energy Commission funds beyond those available to the Manager, Santa Fe Operations Office, it will be necessary for you to consult the Commission.

In the exercise of your responsibilities you are delegated the specific authority to authorize access to classified

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Secretariat Note - \* Circulated as AEC 597/26.

\*\* Copy on file in the Division of  
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thermonuclear material, by personnel possessing an appropriate clearance, to the minimum degree necessary for the successful accomplishment of your mission.

The effective date of your authority, if accepted, will be December 15, 1953. Operational uncertainties make it impossible to state now the exact date for termination of this authority. We expect, however, that it will coincide with the termination of the operational phase of Operation CASTLE.

Authority to fire up to seven shots and to expend specific amounts of fissionable and fusionable material will be requested from the President and communicated to you when received. The number and type of models to be fired, as well as spares, are being determined by the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory and the University of California Radiation Laboratory with Commission approval.

As Commission representative, you are responsible for, and the designated custodian of, all atomic devices and their components which will be transported overseas for this operation. Mr. Carroll L. Tyler, Manager, Santa Fe Operations, U.S. Atomic Energy Commission, will be directed to make necessary transfers into your custody of materials utilized by the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory in its devices. Similarly, Mr. John J. Flaherty, Manager, San Francisco Operations Office, U.S. Atomic Energy Commission, will be directed to make necessary transfers into your custody of materials utilized by the University of California Radiation Laboratory in their devices. To assist you in the technical accountability aspects, Mr. Tyler has established a Source and Fissionable Material Accountability Station at the Pacific Proving Grounds which will be responsible to you for accountability and proper maintenance of accountability records for all nuclear components, both en route to and from, and in, the Pacific Proving Grounds.

The Commission recognizes your responsibility as Task Force Commander to make decisions and take proper action in emergency situations where the health and safety of Task Force personnel or property are concerned, or where the national interest must be protected. You are authorized under such circumstances to make emergency disposal of fissionable materials, if required. If you do make such disposal, the Commission should be notified at the earliest practicable opportunity. You are requested to keep the Commission informed of any significant developments which arise in the course of the operation.

You may be assured of our full support in your undertaking and our sincere wishes for your success.

Sincerely yours,

/s/

Lewis L. Strauss  
Chairman

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